

Philippians

A GUIDE TO JOY

Philippians 2:12-15 – Working Out Our Salvation And Our Attitude

June 28, 2020

1. We are to work out our salvation.

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Philippians 2:12–13 (ESV)

A. Where does spiritual maturity come from?

- Quietists claim Christians are passive in their spiritual growth.
- Pietists claim Christians are active in their spiritual growth.

...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Philippians 2:12–13 (ESV)

BOTH are true!!

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. 1 Corinthians 15:10 (ESV)

...Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. Colossians 1:28–29 (ESV)

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 2 Peter 1:3 (ESV)

For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 1:5–8 (ESV)

B. We work out of us the salvation God has already put in us.

- Work out is an ancient mining term. It means to unearth what is already inside.

C. Working out our salvation begins with a healthy fear of God.

...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling... Philippians 2:12 (ESV)

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. Proverbs 9:10 (ESV)

...thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire. Hebrews 12:28–29 (ESV)

For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives. Hebrews 12:6 (ESV)

D. As we work out our salvation, God shapes our will and gives us the ability to accomplish the good plans He has for us.

...for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Philippians 2:13 (ESV)

- God works in us by changing our desires.

- God works in us by giving us the ability we need to accomplish His work.

2. Do all things without grumbling or arguing.

Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, Philippians 2:14–15 (ESV)

Grumbling is a murmuring attitude on the inside of our life.

Disputing is taking that negative attitude outside of our heart by speaking it to others.

- A. **Jesus was not a grumbler. We are not just to model our life after the humility of Jesus but the attitude of Jesus.**
- B. **Grumbling is a pride-filled attitude, not a humble attitude. It is whining about what we don't have instead of being grateful for what we do have.**
- C. **Christians stay positive in a negative world by keeping their eyes on Jesus.**
- D. **Grumbling was a serious problem for the ancient Israelites. It kept them out of the Promised Land.**
- E. **Grumbling is contagious and deadly.**

And the men whom Moses sent to spy out the land, who returned and made all the congregation grumble against him by bringing up a bad report about the land — Numbers 14:36 (ESV)

...the men who brought up a bad report of the land—died by plague before the Lord. Numbers 14:37 (ESV)

- F. **Grumbling about life is ultimately grumbling against God who orders our life.**

...but there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" Exodus 17:1–2 (ESV)

Suppose a man were traveling to New York to take possession of a large estate that was his through inheritance. On the way there, a mile before he arrived his carriage broken down so he had to walk the last mile. How evil it would be if he spent the last mile wringing his hands complaining that he needed to walk when he was almost to his new home. In the same way, we must remember we are almost home with Christ. We are so close to our eternal inheritance. Will we have hard times in life? Of course. We can walk the last mile to our glorious inheritance with a smile on our face. - John Newton

G. We avoid grumbling so we can be blameless and pure children of God.

...that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation,... Philippians 2:15 (ESV)

H. Our positive attitude in difficult circumstances helps us witness for Christ in a negative world.

Life Group Questions

1. What stuck out to you in the message? What is one thing you will apply?
2. Read Philippians 2:12-13. When it comes to spiritual maturity, some people think spiritual maturity is about "letting go and letting God" (Quietists), while others think spiritual maturity is about the hard work (Pietists). Why is it important to know BOTH are true?
3. Spiritual maturity begins with a healthy fear of God. Reread the verses in point 1.C. What sticks out to you? What does it mean to fear God? Why is fear of God the essential foundation for all growth in God? Do you think a lack of "God fear" is a problem today? What happens when fear of God is missing in the life of a Christian?
4. Philippians 2:13 tells us God works in our wills and our work (literally our energy and ability) for his good pleasure. How has God worked in your life changing your will (your desires)? How has God gifted you to serve others and empowered that gift in your life to help others? Read Hebrews 13:20-21 for the writer of Hebrews closing prayer. In what ways is it similar to Philippians 2:13? What can you learn from that similarity?
5. Read Philippians 2:14-15. Do you struggle with grumbling on the inside and letting that grumbling leak out in your words to others? How do we keep a God-honoring attitude in tough times? Why is a positive attitude an important part of our Christian witness? What do the following verses teach us about grumbling? James 5:9-11, 1 Corinthians 19:9-11, Numbers 11:1-15.